

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

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The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is alerting certain current and former members of the National Guard that they may be eligible for Montgomery G.I. Bill education benefits they previously could not obtain.

Legislation signed into law Oct. 9, 1996, enables certain full-time National Guardsmen who entered their first period of active duty in the military between July 1, 1985, and November 28, 1989, to elect Montgomery G.I. Bill (Active Duty) benefits. The election must be made before July 8, 1997.

"While we believe that those affected by this legislation are aware of their option to elect Montgomery G.I. Bill education benefits, we are making every effort to ensure eligible National Guardsmen have the opportunity to act before the July deadline," said Acting Under Secretary for Benefits Stephen Lemons.

Active duty Guard members should contact their Education Officer for election procedures. Current or former Guard members not currently on active duty can call VA toll-free at (800) 827-1000 for assistance in filing an application. Information inquiries on VA education benefits can also be addressed via VA's Internet Home Page at www.va.gov/benefits/education.

Eligibility for the education benefit requires a \$1,200 co-payment by servicemembers, who typically make the payments over the first year of their service. Current and former National Guard members eligible to make the election under the new legislation must make the co-payment to be eligible, but it can be paid after the July 8 deadline.

Generally, benefits under the Montgomery G.I. Bill (Active Duty) program amount to \$427.87 a month for 36 months of full-time training.